

Camp Starlight

*Magic. Every Time A Child Smiles. Magic. Every Time A Friend Is Made.
Magic. Every Moment We Spend At Camp. Magic.*

Quarterly News

Issue 2 - 2014



Art by: Ernie, 16

Annual Art Auction

Truly a notable holiday of the season.

Page 2

What Social Media Does for Camp

We sure like you
Liking us – we Like you too!

Page 4

Volunteer Spotlight

Granny Sunshine reflects on her time with Camp.

Page 3

Pride, June 2014

Another opportunity when stigma is best left at the gate.

Page 3

Red Ribbon Show - Jonathan Reitan

Salem's premier annual HIV/AIDS fundraising event.

Page 3

Satonia Rodgers Shares, "An Amazing Place"

Camp is where the heart is...

I was one of the first generation of campers. I was seven years old when Camp Starlight began and I went every year until I was 14. Camp Starlight is a camp for kids who either have HIV/AIDS or are affected by it.

My mother has AIDS. She's had it since before I was born, before my oldest sibling was born 26 years ago. Before camp I didn't realize that other people's moms and dads had AIDS. Surprising to me, people cared about me there. I've been in and out of foster homes since I was two months old, taken away because of her drug use. But at Camp Starlight I was surrounded by adults who cared and wanted to know.

My first camp counselor was Kit. She is an amazing woman. That first year at camp she showered me and my fellow cabin mates with love. She made sure that every day I knew she cared about me and that I could talk to her about anything. After camp was over I'd write

these little notes and letters to her in a journal, telling her about school, my life, and my brother and sister. She never saw them. By now they were lost between foster homes.

As I got older Kit was not my counselor anymore, but she always seemed to be able to check in with me once a day or so. There's a Stargram (what we call little notes people send to each other and give out at meals) in my wallet from her. I was 12 or 13 and there was an activity called the flying squirrel, where they hook you to a harness and a rope that is connected to a pulley, with your cabin mates holding the other side. You're supposed to hold on as they run with the rope, pulling you in the air. I was so afraid to do the flying squirrel. I couldn't believe that they actually wanted me to let a bunch of young teenagers pull me straight into the air! Being cheered on by my cabin mates, counselors, and other adults I finally did it. It was so much fun! The next day this Stargram came from Kit that said "Hurray for trying new things!!!" I keep it in my wallet to remember to never be afraid to try something new. Nowadays it is not really for doing something like the flying squirrel, but applying for a college that I want to do my

post graduate at, or going out on a date with a girl I like. It's worn from being looked at and felt all these years. I should probably laminate it.

Camp Starlight is an amazing place run by amazing people who truly care about kids. I made so many different friends my age at camp. One of my best friends was a girl the same age as me, who required a wheelchair or two canes when she walked. Another was a girl who was hilarious and we would run around telling people jokes. There is one thing that makes camp so important: for at least one week, kids just get to be kids.



Camp Alumna
Satonia Rodgers, 22

Foods, Drinks, Music, and ART!

If we took a holiday, took some time to celebrate, just one day out of life, it would be, it would be so nice.



Arthur Lindsey, Michelle Alonzo, Dan Garland and friends

Camp Starlight celebrated its inaugural art auction at the Cleaners on January 19th 2014. Recruited by Camp Starlight Director, Randy Bodkin, the event was curated by the gifted and sought after, Arthur Lindsey. Lindsey's colleague was art enthusiast, Michelle Alonzo.

Lindsey brought his usual A game, recruiting some of the most dedicated artists in contemporary art. A few of the highlights were Juxtapoz Magazine's January cover artist, Mel Kadel; Vice Magazine's favorite photographer and Camden firefighter, Gabriel Angel; and a breathtaking collaboration between the selfless, Chris Johanson and Johanna Jackson.

Art admirers from all over the country were in attendance, in order to raise awareness and money for Camp Starlight. Lindsey received bidding inquiries months before the auction took place. The outpouring of generosity ranging from volunteers to donors, was so immense, the event raised over \$10,000 to benefit Camp Starlight.

The sparkle of camp was felt in every detail. Dan Garland created a well designed flyer that captured the principle of Camp Starlight. DJ, Jen Olesen played a thoughtful and jovial set, which resulted in some super cute slow dancing by the end of the night. Auction goes winned and dined on gorgeous fare thanks to Camp's own, Jesse Meida. As the bidding closed, attendees scrambled to place their final offers on bidding sheets that modeled Camp Starlight's colors.

It was truly a notable holiday of the season.

By: Michelle Alonzo

Everybody "Likes" Camp Starlight!

Are you following Camp Starlight on Facebook? Yes, you can now log on to your computer or fire up your smart phone, and there among the hilarious

cat videos and cute photos of your friend's kids you can also receive the latest and greatest news and updates from Camp Starlight.

We've been fortunate to have built such a strong community of friends and supporters over the years, and our online community is shaping up to be no different. We currently have over 1,100 people who have "liked" our Facebook page. They're a diverse group of people with a variety of connections to Camp. Among them include past and present volunteers, camper family members, friends, donors, sponsors, like-minded social agencies, and many community partners – each of them supportive of our mission to provide a safe, caring, and fun summer camp for kids affected by HIV/AIDS.

We use our Facebook page to share a wide variety of information, as well as to engage in conversations with our community members. Whenever there's an important Camp-related announcement to make, we'll share it on Facebook. These could include the roll-out of camper applications for this summer's camp session, upcoming volunteer opportunities, and press releases. We also use Facebook to share details about the wide variety of Camp Starlight fundraisers that happen throughout the year, and how folks can get involved and show support for our kids and their families.

There are plenty of photos to peruse on our Facebook page, too. A quick way to put a smile on your face is to flip through our album of photos from past years' summer camps –

Peter Murdoch and Mark Montoya hanging the show



the looks on our campers faces range from silly to cute to heart-warming. There are also photos from fundraisers and other previous Camp-related events. Sometimes we share links to online articles or videos that feature Camp Starlight, as well as any news articles about HIV that we feel are relative and worth sharing.

One of the things we love the most about our Facebook page is interacting with our page followers. Everyone is welcome to start a conversation about Camp, and it's great seeing the way our Facebook friends interact with each other online. We often receive comments from moms and dads and grandparents who enjoy seeing photos of their campers, who send them virtual kisses during camp, and who express their thanks to donors and supporters for the many ways that their families benefit from Camp Starlight. And our Facebook page is also an easy way to contact the folks back at the Camp Starlight home office – we often receive private messages and can usually respond within a day or so, if not sooner.

It's easy to connect with us on Facebook. You can find our page by typing "Camp Starlight" into Facebook's search field – just look for our familiar yellow-and-blue star logo. Clicking on our name will take you to our profile page, where you can give us the "thumbs-up." You'll start seeing Camp Starlight posts in your own Facebook newsfeed in no time!

It truly takes a community to make Camp Starlight happen, and we are grateful to have our friends and supporters join us on Facebook and share our story with friends and family of their own. As our camp community continues to go, so grows our online community as well. Needless to say, we sure like you Liking us – we Like you too!

By: Scott Weimer

Pride 2014

We hope to emphasize the importance of relationships needed to strengthen families, and to support children affected by HIV and AIDS. Projects and organizations that strengthen the community structure become significantly important as the epidemic continues.

Some of the stigma associated with HIV / AIDS includes particular beliefs about the Gay and Lesbian community. Acceptance, social support and fair treatment are reasons that Portland Pride is a logical place for Camp Starlight to get involved. It is another opportunity when stigma is best left at the gate.

Our connection with this community means that there are more sources of social, emotional, and material support for all who get involved with Camp Starlight.



Families who face formidable challenges from HIV / AIDS get to enjoy a safe place, where they can simply express who they are without concern or fear of bigotry and prejudices. The purpose of pride fits with Camp Starlight's mission by providing a caring, safe, spiritual and FUN experience, inclusive of children whose lives are affected by HIV / AIDS. Within various contexts of life, family members are stigmatized and burdened by secrecy and fear about their family's situation or status. However, Pride makes room for all families to feel respected, supported and safe within festival boundaries.

Pride NW Mission: The mission of Pride Northwest, Inc. is to encourage and celebrate the positive diversity of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans communities, and to assist in the education of all people through the development of activities that showcase the history, accomplishments, and talents of these communities (www.pridenw.org).

By: Randy Bodkin

Granny Sunshine

My name is Mary Hendricks and I am a camp grandma at Camp Starlight. The children and counselors refer to me as "Granny Sunshine."



I have volunteered for Camp Starlight for the past seven years. Words cannot express how truly wondrous and special this HIV / AIDS camp is for our Camp Starlight children.

Living with HIV for more than 30 years as a mother and grandmother, I can understand how our kids must cope with not only the sickness, but also the HIV stigma in their lives on a daily basis. Through Camp Starlight they get to have one magical week in a safe and caring environment just being themselves: smiling, laughing, having fun and making friends with others in their same situation.

I have watched these children grow and mature into responsible, happy young adults. They make me proud and give me hope and optimism for their future living with HIV. My daughter has stated the hardest part she had growing up while affected by HIV was having no peers to talk to and wishing there was a camp like this when she was a child...and my six year old granddaughter, Samantha, has attended twice and talks about Camp Starlight ALL the time and often says, "I love Camp Starlight, Granny!" And I often think to myself, so do I.

By: Mary Hendricks

Red Ribbon Show

I started the Red Ribbon Show in 2007 after testing HIV positive and seeing first hand how local HIV / AIDS organizations and charities can change a life. The first benefit was for Marion County Health Department's HIV/AIDS program, which was the only case management services and prevention programs in place in the mid-Willamette Valley, the only place for recently diagnosed people like myself to seek support and health management services.

Fast forward to 2012 where our annual event has grown by leaps and bounds in attendance and funds raised as Salem's premier annual HIV / AIDS fundraising event. Performers came from Seattle to San Francisco, autographed memorabilia was donated for auction by HIV positive celebrities (model Jack Mackenroth and Styx bassist Chuck Panozzo) and our corporate sponsorship program debuted. I had recently received an AIDS diagnosis and my prognosis wasn't good. I wanted to make this a year to remember and to make sure that every dollar raised went to help change a life, just as funds from this show had helped changed my own life in 2007. Of all the HIV / AIDS organizations in Oregon, Camp Starlight was one I kept hearing about and all the amazing things they did for children affected by HIV / AIDS. Our younger generation is one not often seen in the "spotlight" of the disease but they

deserve just as much, if not more, support than all other groups and communities facing this epidemic. While I always wanted to be a camp volunteer, I was never able to because of work...but I knew how to put on an event and raise some money, so on July 8, 2012 at Salem's Southside Speakeasy, we packed the house and raised \$8,693 in one night.

To date, the Red Ribbon Show has raised nearly \$50,000 for many northwest HIV / AIDS

organizations as well as the Tijuana AIDS Project and in 2014 we will move out of the bar and into the ballroom. The 7th Annual Red Ribbon Show will be held August 9, 2014 at Salem's Red Lion Hotel and will benefit HIV Day Center of Portland and Valley AIDS Information Network of Corvallis.

www.facebook.com/redribbonshow

By: Jonathan Reitan



In Appreciation

There's a tradition at Camp of communing before each meal. The opportunity for praise and recognition emerges. This is our time to say "thank you" to each other. To everyone who contributes to this special week, we give our most sincere gratitude.

Red Ribbon Foundation

Jonathan Reitan

NetRippers FC

Sammy Rodriguez

Special Thank You

Rock and Pika

Mark Griffin

Alan Cassinelli

Department Stores

Costco

Target

Fred Meyer

Big 5 Sporting Goods

Bi-Mart

Corporate

Schwabe Williamson and Wyatt

Portland General Electric

Amica Mutual Insurance

Firehouse Subs - Beaverton, OR

Firehouse Subs - Vancouver, WA

Ace Hotel

Volunteers/Venues

Michelle Alonzo

Arthur Lindsey - Art Curator

Everyone Who Attends Camp

Media

Statesman Journal

Huffington Post

PQ Monthly

Jenny on the Page

98.7 The Bull

Needle Prick Project



Camp Starlight's Continued Mission

Founded in 1999, Camp Starlight provides a caring, safe, spiritual and fun week-long residential summer camp for children in Oregon and Washington whose lives are affected by HIV/AIDS. Some of our campers are HIV+ themselves, while others have someone in their immediate family – a parent, a sibling, a care-taker – who is infected. Camp Starlight brings forth a sense of safety, acceptance and friendship so that these children can cast aside the worries and fears they may have around HIV and enjoy a rich, rewarding and fun summer camp experience in an environment free from the burdens of stigma or shame. Children come to Camp Starlight at no cost to their families, and enjoy a one-to-one ratio with a staff of knowledgeable,

compassionate, and devoted volunteers, including medical, educational and mental health professionals. Activities at Camp Starlight include swimming, arts and crafts, music and dance, nature hikes, horseback riding, archery, sports and recreation, a camp-wide talent show, campfires, sleeping out under the stars, and a whole lot more. It's an incredibly fun and magical week focused solely on the kids.



Commission Members

Randall Bodkin — Chair

Ebony Frison — Co-Chair

Kit Noble — Treasurer

Melanie Smith-Wilusz — Secretary

Sarah Green — Camp Doctor

Committees

Camp Director - Randall Bodkin

Development - Kit Noble, Jesse Meida

Volunteer Coordinator - Joanne Brown

Social Media and Marketing - Scott Weimer and Greta Swanson

Outreach - Sandi Griffin and Janet Bailey

Programming - Mel Smith and Jenny Block

Camper Community - Ebony Frison

Mental Health ("Twinkle Team") - Mark Duell

Contact Information

Phone: (503) 964-1516

Email: info@camp-starlight.org

Web: www.camp-starlight.org

PO Box 80666

Portland, OR 97280

© 2014, Camp Starlight Inc.



"I felt really happy being here."

"Happy and safe."

"Good, but I missed my dad."

"A lot more happier."



"Really good. Lots of fun. Didn't think I'd like the new campground, but I did."

"It's fun — all the activities were fun — especially the swing. It's cool. I want the rest to be a secret."



"Best place ever. Home away from home."

"Got to ride the pony, went canoeing, swimming."

"I tell my friend to come to Camp Starlight next year with me."

"It's the best camp ever."



"Helps get away from other life."

"Getting some clothes for my sister at Kit's Kaboodle."

"I feel like it helps out a lot, because it's nice to have a break from home."

"It taught me that there are people who care."

